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## INDICATIVE NOTES



- Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana launched a new feature in the Supreme Court's official website called 'Indicative Notes'.
- This feature is aimed at providing concise summaries of landmark judgments in an easy-to-understand format.
- This will serve as a useful resource for media persons and the general public who wish to be better informed about the rulings of the court.

## SOVEREIGN GOLD BOND SCHEME 2021-22



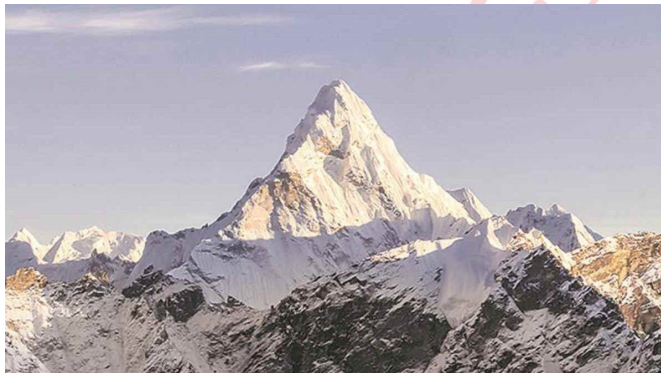
- The Central Government in consultation with the Reserve Bank of India, has decided to issue Sovereign Gold Bonds.
- The Sovereign Gold Bonds will be issued in six tranches from 17th May to September 2021.
- The Bonds will be sold through Scheduled Commercial banks (except Small Finance Banks and Payment Banks), Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited (SHCIL), designated post offices, and recognised stock exchanges viz., National Stock Exchange of India Limited and Bombay Stock Exchange Limited.
- The minimum permissible investment will be one gram of gold.
- Investors will be compensated at a fixed rate of 2.50 percent per annum payable semi-annually on the nominal value.
- The Bonds will be restricted for sale to resident individuals, Hindu Undivided Families, Trusts, Universities and Charitable Institutions.
- The tenor of the Bond will be for a period of 8 years with exit option after 5th year to be exercised on the next interest payment dates.

## SMOKELESS CREMATION



- Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar has developed a prototype of a moveable electric cremation system which claims to be using first of its kind technology that involves smokeless cremation despite using wood.
- It uses half of the wood otherwise required for the cremation and still is eco-friendly because of the technology that uses combustion air system.
- It is based on wick-stove technology in which the wick when lighted glows yellow.
- This is converted into smokeless blue flame with the help of combustion air system installed over the wicks.
- The cremation system or incinerator heats up at 1044 degree Celsius which ensures complete sterilization.
- Keeping in view the present pandemic situation if this system can be adopted, may provide respectable cremation to the near and dear ones of those who cannot afford the financial burden of arranging wood.

## Mount Pumori of Everest Massif



- Two women mountaineers, Baljeet Kaur of Himachal Pradesh and Gunbala Sharma of Rajasthan became the first Indian women to summit Mount Pumori in Nepal.
- Two sherpas, Nuri Sherpa and Gelu Sherpa accompanied the two mountaineers to the peak respectively.
- The mountaineers are part of a 12-member team that will attempt to conquer all four peaks that are part of the Everest Massif – Mt Nuptse (7,862 metres), Mt Pumori (7,161m), Mt Lhotse (8,516m), Mt Everest (8,848.86m).
- The duo are the first in the country to scale a mountain that is part of the Everest Massif.
- On May 10, 2021 two Indian male mountaineers – Hem Raj and Stanzin Norboo had summited the same mountain, along with four sherpas.
- From the technical point of view, Mt Pumori and Mt Nuptse are considered to be the toughest mountains to summit in the world.
- Pumori is a mountain on the Nepal-China border in the Mahalangur section of the Himalayas.
- It lies just eight kilometres west of Mount Everest.
- Pumori, meaning “the Mountain Daughter” in Sherpa language, was named by George Mallory. Climbers sometimes refer to Pumori as “Everest’s Daughter”.

## Whitley award



- It is also known as the 'Green Oscar'.
- It was established in 1994 by Edward Whitley.
- The Awards seek to recognise outstanding contributions to wildlife conservation with a focus on Asia, Africa and Latin America, bringing international attention to the work of deserving individuals committed to precipitating long-lasting conservation benefits with the support of local communities.
- WFN also provides media and speech training to enable winners to effectively communicate their work and inspire further philanthropic support.
- Each year a previous Whitley Award winner is selected to receive the Whitley Gold Award in recognition of their outstanding contribution to conservation.
- The Gold Award winners are international advocates for biodiversity with the passion and ambition to spread conservation messages to a wider audience.
- The Award is worth £60,000 in project funding for up to two years.
- Gold winners also join the Whitley Awards Judging Panel and act as a mentor to new winners during the Awards week.

## Al-Aqsa mosque



- There was an outbreak of violence at Al-Aqsa mosque, as tensions were building between Jews and Palestinians across Israel.
- Originally built as a small prayer house, the mosque was reconstructed by the Umayyad caliph Abd al-Malik in 705 CE.
- It underwent renovations under various dynasties, including the Ottoman empire, the Supreme Muslim Council, and Jordan.
- In Arabic, "aqsa" translates as farthest, and is a reference to Islamic scripture and its account of the Prophet Muhammad traveling from Mecca to the mosque in one night to pray and then ascending to heaven.
- The mosque sits inside a 35-acre site known by Muslims as Haram al-Sharif, or the Noble Sanctuary and by Jews as the Temple Mount.

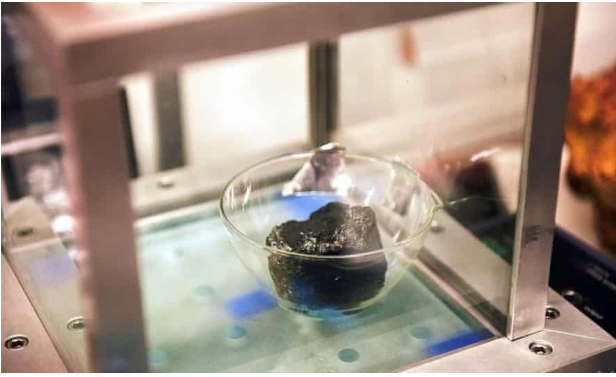
- The site is part of the Old City of Jerusalem, sacred to Christians, Jews and Muslims.
- Though Jerusalem's Old City is under Israeli control, the mosque has remained under the administration of the Jordanian and Palestinian-led Islamic Waqf since 1967.
- The Waqf is a religious trust that manages Islamic historical sites around the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.
- Jews and Christians are allowed to visit, but unlike Muslims, are prohibited from praying on the grounds under the status quo arrangement.
- For Jews, the Temple Mount, known in Hebrew as Har Habayit, is the holiest place because it was the site of two ancient temples.
- UNESCO has classified the Old City of Jerusalem and its walls as a World Heritage Site.

## Villagers in Leh gain knowledge through listening to Radio



- In eastern Ladakh, 80 KM away from Leh, Kyungyam is a small village surrounded by the mountains.
- The villagers depend on the radio to gain knowledge.
- Our Leh correspondent has sent us this report on the occasion of 50yrs of AIR Leh services.
- Though it's a small village, Kyungyam in Changthang region has a speciality.
- This is the 1st Revenue village in the vastly spread Changthang region in pre-independence regime.
- In the present times, Durbuk and Nyoma which were revenue part of Kyungyam are developed as Block level villages.
- However, as the 1st revenue village, the awareness on power of knowledge has made the villagers avid Radio listeners. Mainstay of Villagers is farming and animal rearing.
- However, villagers are keen in gaining knowledge through listening to Radio.
- Villagers keep Radio as company to listen to news or their favourite Ladakhi programs on All India Radio.

## 'Extremely rare' 4.5 bn-yr-old meteorite to go on public display in UK



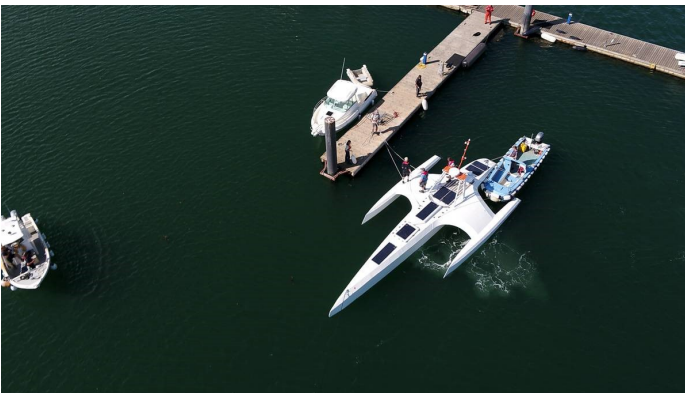
- An over 4.5 billion-year-old meteorite that fell in Gloucestershire in February is going on public display at London's Natural History Museum.
- It's an "extremely rare" type of meteorite and the first fall to have been recovered from the UK in 30 years, NHM said. It was recovered hours after it was seen to fall and has had minimal terrestrial contact.

## Russian space agency to send actress, director to shoot '1st film in space'



- Russian space agency Roscosmos will send an actress and a director to space to make what it's calling the first movie in space.
- Actress Yulia Peresild, director Klim Shipenko and their crew will blast off in a Russian rocket from Baikonur cosmodrome in October.
- NASA and Tom Cruise also plan to make a film aboard the International Space Station.

## Mayflower 400



- World's First Unmanned Vessel named "Mayflower 400" is set to Navigate Across the Atlantic.
- It has been built by the marine research organization ProMare in collaboration with IBM.
- It will begin its transatlantic voyage on May 15, 2021, to track aquatic mammals, analyze plastic in the water, and study marine pollution.
- Mayflower 400 is a completely autonomous ship. It is a 15-m-long trimaran that weighs 9 tons.
- It is powered by Artificial Intelligence and the Sun's energy via solar panels.

- ProMare invested \$1 million along with global contributions in the form of technology from India, the United States, and Switzerland to build the ship.
- The ship, equipped with a smart captain, six high-tech cameras and radars, has been trained with audio data to avoid collisions, correct its course, detect marine animals, and gather information of the population of the aquatic animals.
- The ship can also listen to whales with a self-activating hydrophone.
- Currently, the ship is trained to handle 50 meters high waves.
- Mayflower 400 autonomous ship provides an edge to the scientists in exploring the rough seas as the ship will be unmanned.

## RBI grants PPI authorisation to Eroute Technologies



- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted authorisation to Eroute Technologies to operate as a prepaid payment instruments (PPI) company.
- The RBI issued authorisation to Eroute Technologies Pvt Ltd with perpetual validity to commence issuance and operations of semi-closed pre-paid instruments in the country.
- The company aims to serve the underserved segments that comprise almost 680 million people, by creating user-friendly payment solutions addressing the specific needs of various consumer segments of our society.
- PPIs are instruments that facilitate the purchase of goods and services, including financial services, remittances, and funds transfers, against the value stored in such instruments.

## World Bank report: India was largest recipient of remittances in 2020



- India was the largest recipient of remittances in 2020, as per the report, "Migration and Development Brief " released by the World Bank.
- India has been the largest recipient of remittances since 2008.
- However, the remittance received by India in 2020 was over USD 83 billion, which is a drop of 0.2 per cent from 2019 (USD 83.3 billion).
- Globally, the remittance flow was USD 540 billion in 2020, which is 1.9% lower as compared to that of 2019, when it was USD 548 billion.

- The top five remittance recipient countries in 2020, in current US dollar terms, were India, China, Mexico, the Philippines, and Egypt.
- The top five recipients in 2020, as a share of gross domestic product (GDP), were, by contrast, smaller economies: Tonga, Lebanon, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and El Salvador.
- The largest remittance-sending country in 2020 was United States (USD68 billion).
- It was followed by the UAE (USD43 billion), Saudi Arabia (USD34.5 billion), Switzerland (USD27.9 billion), Germany (USD22 billion), and China (USD18 billion).
- From India, the Remittances outflow in 2020 was USD 7 billion, against USD 7.5 billion in 2019.

## Martin Griffiths appointed new UN Humanitarian Chief



- Veteran British diplomat Martin Griffiths has been appointed as the new Chief at the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), for a period of five years.
- Griffiths will replace Mark Lowcock as the new Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (USG/ERC) of OCHA.
- He is currently serving as the United Nations Special Envoy for Yemen.
- The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) aims to strengthen the international response to complex emergencies and natural disasters.
- The headquarters of OCHA is based in two locations which are New York and Geneva.

## ‘COVI Van’



- Delhi Police has launched a helpline number for senior citizens who are struggling with their essential needs amid Covid-19.
- South District Police of the national capital has launched a COVI Van Helpline (012- 26241077) for senior citizens in the neighbourhood amid the coronavirus situation here.
- The information of commencement of COVI Van has been disseminated in the Greater Kailash -1 area through beat officers and Residents Welfare Association (RWA).
- All the precautions including – sanitisation, gloves, masks and social distancing – will be taken while and after every visit.

- After receiving any call from COVI Van, deployed police official on COVI Van with a beat officer will go to the house of senior citizens and help them in getting their needs, including any essential item, vaccination and medicines.

## CBSE launches 'Dost for Life' mobile app



- Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has launched a new mobile app for students and parents.
- The new app 'Dost for Life' is an exclusive psychological counselling app for students and parents of CBSE-affiliated schools.
- The new App will simultaneously cater to students and parents from CBSE-affiliated schools in different geographies across the world.
- The app will also provide students with other resource material such as suggestive course guides for after senior secondary education, tips on mental health and well being, and a 'corona guide' with information on daily safety protocol, learning from home and self-care.
- The counselling sessions shall be provided to students of classes 9-12 by 83 volunteer counsellors and school principals.
- The sessions will be free of cost and provided on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.
- Students and parents will be able to choose the time slot for the sessions, either between 9:30 am and 1:30 pm or between 1:30 pm and 5:30 pm.